



TITLE:

# Sacred Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction: The Salus Populi Romani Madonna in the World

AUTHOR(S):

Mochizuki, Mia M.

---

CITATION:

Mochizuki, Mia M.. Sacred Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction: The Salus Populi  
Romani Madonna in the World. Kyoto Studies in Art History 2016, 1: 129-144

ISSUE DATE:

2016-03

URL:

<https://doi.org/10.14989/229454>

RIGHT:

© Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University and the authors

## Sacred Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction: The *Salus Populi Romani* Madonna in the World

Mia M. Mochizuki

### Baroque Machines

A curious vignette provides an unlikely introduction to the world of elaborate Baroque machinery: a pudgy, if industrious putto raises the earth on high via a set of rotating gears that reduce the heavy lifting of a planet by leveraging a complicated system of integrated pulleys (fig. 1). Its explanatory motto, "*Fac pedem figat et terram movebit*," or "give him a place to fix his foot and he shall move the earth," can only be understood within its context in the *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu* (Antwerp, 1640), a book that commemorated the centennial anniversary of the Society of Jesus with its landmark accomplishments and obstacles. The emblem played on the word "conversion" as celebrating both the Society's commitment to world-wide exploration and the "turning" of people to Christianity on such missions, as the subtitle for this chapter implies, "*Regnorum et Provinciarum per Societatem conversio*." Employing a block and tackle pulley system, the scene references Archimedes' principles for harnessing the strength of compounded force to lift objects otherwise too heavy to move, the weight of the world paralleled to the difficulty of this endeavor. And to drive home the point, the motto echoes Pappus of Alexandria's record of the great inventor-engineer's proud claim, "Give me somewhere to stand and I will move the earth," with one discrete substitution.<sup>1</sup> In the *Imago*, the first-person voice of Archimedes' claim has been replaced by an objective third-person pronoun whose agency could elastically, ambiguously, span both the "he" of a Jesuit missionary and the "it" of a machine. In this formulation, the identity of the actor responsible for "moving the earth" seamlessly glides between Jesuit and machine, the person and the tools of technology needed to achieve the result.

Another emblem in the same book proposes just what kind of machine was envisioned for the logistics of this global enterprise. This time, a man is shown laboring at a printing press with the motto, "*Societas Iesu persecutionibus formatur*," ("*The Society is made complete by adversity*").<sup>2</sup> For early modern Jesuits, the printing press functioned not only as a propagation- and conversion-machine, but also as a metaphor for the pressures and setbacks of the Society. The classical reference here was to the work of a poet, not a scientist: Virgil's *Aeneid* (6: 77–80), "*fingitque premendo*," when Apollo literally imprints the Cumaean Sibyl's body and soul.<sup>3</sup> The intention was to provide a mechanical extension of Thomas à Kempis' *Imitatio Christi* concept that had proved so formative to the Society's spiritual charism.<sup>4</sup> Machines, whether pulley or printing press, supplanted a late medieval model preferenced on man, usurping the stage to assume the role of proxy for the production of object and person alike. Outside the picture plane too, the press played a significant role in Jesuit global strategy.<sup>5</sup> Jesuits not only established presses throughout the world, one in India (1556) before Rome (1559), they also went so far as to ship a whole press from Lisbon to Goa to

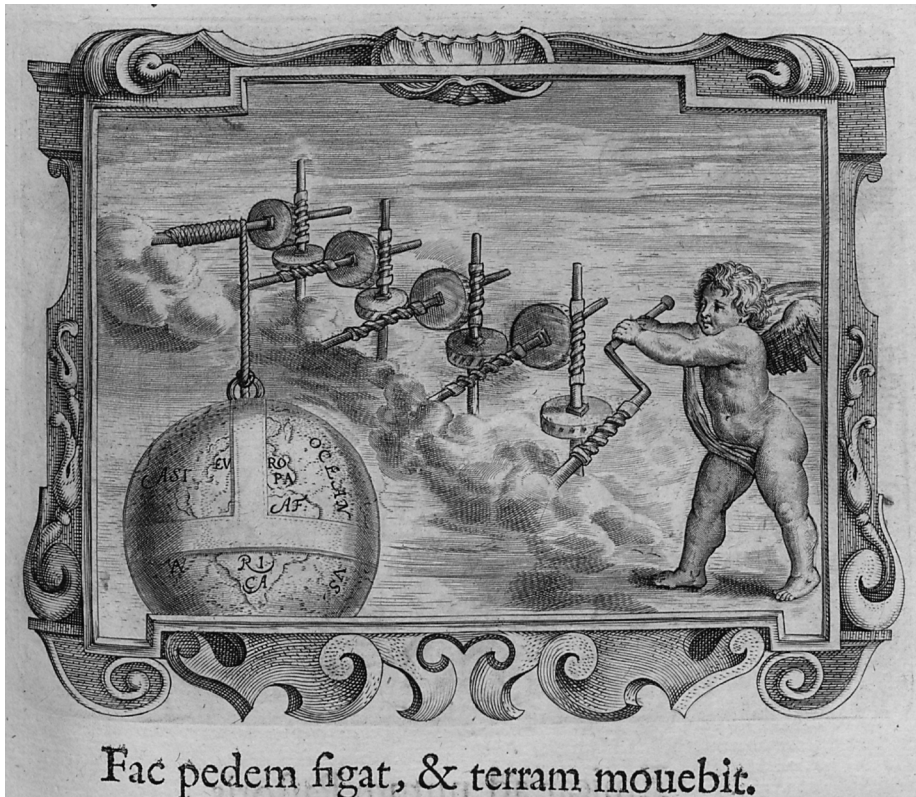


Fig. 1 "*Fac pedem figat, & terram mouebit*" in Joannes Bollandus, S.J., Godefridus Henschenius, S.J., Johannes Tollenarius, S.J., Sidronius Hosschius, S.J., Jacob vande Walle, S.J., *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu, a Provincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata* (Antwerp, 1640), p. 321, Maurits Sabbe Library, Faculty of Theology and Religious Sciences, KU Leuven, Leuven.

Macao and finally to Japan. Even when the Jesuits were expelled from Japan in 1614, they made sure to bring their press to Macao, via Manila, to carry on printing in exile, despite the labor involved in transporting twenty-seven crates.<sup>6</sup> In Japan, the Jesuit Press established a remarkably prolific publishing house in its own right, producing books in western languages, *romaji*- and *kanji*-scripts, and in twenty-five years releasing approximately sixty-seven titles with a little less than half still extant today.<sup>7</sup>

The confluence of the need to reach the world and the advent of the printing press presented an opportunity not to be missed by the foot soldiers of the Catholic Reformation. In the dominant historiography, printmaking has been overwhelmingly characterized as a Protestant preoccupation, crediting the success of the Reformation to its distribution of books in the vernacular and widespread circulation of anonymous broadsheets that fanned the flames of radical change with an unstoppable flow of independent thinking. This interpretation has overshadowed the fact that the Catholic Church also very cleverly adopted and inverted the latest in technological innovation, the printing press, to bulwark a tradition under attack. By turning that most impressive foe to the service of the Church, Pope Pius V appropriated one of the strongest weapons of the Protestant revolt for the rehabilitation of Catholic teaching, thereby instigating radical shifts in the narratives of devotional image production and a critical recalibration of the status of Catholic sacred art in the aftermath of reform. Using what



Fig. 2 Anonymous, *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, ca. 6th–10th century, tempera on panel, Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore, Borghese Chapel, Rome.

could be termed a “printing-press model” of cultural exchange allowed the Church to amass a pictorial conscript of multiples to successfully confront the global challenges of Reformation, at least initially, if its long-term effects could not be foreseen.

### Replication, Not Repetition

The catalyst, as so often occurs, was a seemingly innocuous decision. In the waning days of June 1569, Pope Pius V took the unprecedented step of permitting St. Francis Borgia, third Superior General of the Society of Jesus (r. 1565–1572), to make the earliest official copies of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* (fig. 2). With this single act, he sealed this icon’s status as the face of universal post-Tridentine Catholicism. The later appearance of this *Madonna* in Rome and Munich, Lisbon and Isfahan, Bahia and Beijing, Goa and Gorgora, provides some indication of the distance she would travel from her modest origins, both conceptually and geographically, from the time her portrait was reputed to have been painted by St. Luke on a table top built by the young Jesus through her processing of the Roman streets of Lazio on the Feast Day of the Assumption (August 15<sup>th</sup>) during the late medieval period.<sup>8</sup> In fact, among all the achievements of the Society under Borgia’s leadership, it was his recognition of the



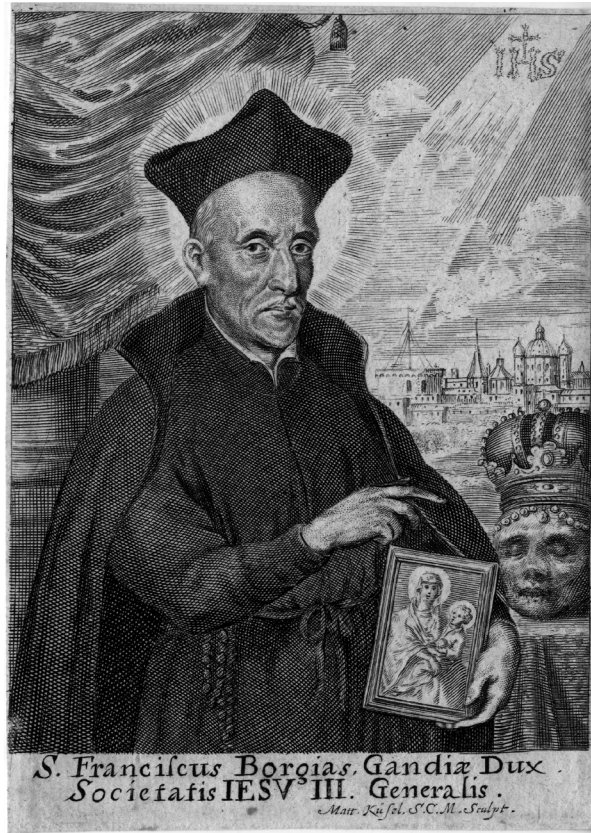


Fig. 3 Melchior Küsell, *Portrait of St. Francis Borgia with the Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, 17th century, engraving, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Fondo Iconografico Lamalle, S. Francisco Borgia, *sub nomine*, Rome.

rich potential of the *Madonna* of the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore for missionary work that was already singled out in his first biography by Pedro de Ribadeneira, S.J. (1592) and remembered in an early visual hagiography by Melchior Küsell (fig. 3).<sup>9</sup> Appropriately, of all the portraits of St. Francis Borgia, the one that best tells this story is itself a print. Before the crowned scull, a reference to the decisive moment of vocation during the viewing of the deceased body of Empress Isabel of Portugal, wife of Charles V, before the ray of inspiration in the background with the Jesuit monogram that was the result of this call, Borgia proudly cradles a copy of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* in his left hand.

It is the widespread ramifications of this apparently simple papal gesture of favor that reward closer scrutiny. For the problem was a fundamental one: how can multiple copies of a singular sacred image exist for an object whose unmitigated uniqueness defines its being? At the dawn of a global age, the printing press concept, like photography, the facsimile and the digitalized internet after it, raised the stakes of what it meant to create in imitation of an original.<sup>10</sup> Gerhard Wolf's foundational study of the *Salus Populi Romani* stops, tantalizingly, just at this fascinating point when this *Madonna* was launched into the world at large, as do significant contributions by Pasquale d'Elia, S.J. just after World War II and Steven Ostrow, Kristen Noreen, and

Midori Wakakuwa more recently.<sup>11</sup> When confronted with the logistical problem of how to make an image that had been a rallying standard for centuries in the battle against heresy cover more ground on the world stage, Pius made a canny call.

Like the Protestant endorsement of the printing press, the Catholic appropriation focused on this machine's magical ability to multiply one image into many, what must have seemed like a real-world application of the miracle of Jesus turning one loaf of bread into the sustenance for multitudes. Lisa Pon has described the Renaissance culture of copying, when "*copia*" was informed by the material plenty of abundance, as a delicate tightrope between novelty and tradition that played out in the most vigorous and sustained debate over the appropriate uses and modes of imitation that Europe had seen.<sup>12</sup> But where repetition became the definitive attribute of the Protestant printing press, the determining factor for broadcasting a single message widely, the Catholic approach to this machine was subtly, but significantly different. For mission, what was critical about the printing press was not only its vaunted capacity to produce originals in unprecedented number, but specifically its ability to reproduce authenticity. The ideal was not so much a mimetic repetition, but a replication of papal-approved authority by certifying an object's religious provenance beyond a shadow of a doubt.<sup>13</sup> In a rather radical definition of what constituted a copy, "identical" was thus no longer construed as a study in verisimilitude, a likeness in the immortal words of Jan van Eyck, "as best I can."

Differing appearances along a singular *topos* were acceptable as long as they shared a single, unbroken meta-lineage of pictorial authority. The Ingolstadt Jesuit Petrus Canisius would codify this perspective on the reproduction of sacred art in his *De Maria Virgine incomparabili* (Ingolstadt, 1577), a monumental defense of the cult of the Virgin undertaken at Pius' behest to counter Protestant attacks. Despite different styles and degrees of accuracy, for Canisius, representations of the Virgin could qualify as "Lukan images," whether St. Luke painted multiple models himself or only a single archetype from which an unbroken chain flowed in an uninterrupted, almost biblical begetting of authorization by precedence, so long as it was formed directly after one of the representations attributed to him.<sup>14</sup> No written source preserves the name of the artist of the first copy as a distraction to this chain of evidence, only referring to him as "a grand Roman painter," "an excellent Roman artist," and "a famous brush, the pride of Italy and the soul of painting," taking advantage of anonymity to respect the artist's reported fear that a disgrace would befall him for daring to imitate the painting.<sup>15</sup> Kristin Noreen has rightly stressed that authenticity in this cause relied upon a "believed association" with the Roman original, no matter how distant that connection may actually have been in reality, what Akira Akiyama has wittily, and accurately, described as the "all copies lead to Rome" phenomenon, and this would only become more true as the image of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* spread across the globe.<sup>16</sup> The establishment of a network that reached back to its exemplar was more important than the icon's appearance alone.

Moreover, the status of replications as new "originals" ensured that the momentous first copying of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* had to occur in strictly controlled circumstances that could even be described as bearing a whiff of ritual. Pius insisted the painting not be lowered from the tabernacle for study, and no one was allowed to be present during the work, except for Borgia and the anonymous Roman painter, who reportedly, "had no other witness but the light of the sun," lending the whole proceeding an aura of mystery reminiscent of its creation myth.<sup>17</sup> A hint of a

nascent eulogy of the copy even emerges from contemporary descriptions of its initial reception. When the fruit of this secret labor, the first replica of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, was shown to Pius, he so admired its beauty and likeness to the model that he “bathed it in tears.”<sup>18</sup> Its status as sacred imagery was thus affirmed by both its own carefully constructed genesis narrative and almost miraculous first beholding, a tradition of recognition that leavened veneration of the original, such as the devotion offered recently by the first Jesuit pope, Pope Francis I (July 20, 2013), with the attendance of wondrous hallmark passages for its copies, as during the last rites of St. Carlo Borromeo.<sup>19</sup> In this interpretation of the printing press’ impressive capabilities, the replication of sacred art instituted a visual parallel to the universal message of doctrine that remained orthodox despite its individual expression and local patois.

### Of Reform and Reformatting

The culture of reform that pervaded the post-Tridentine Church ensured the switch from original to copy of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* was no standard duplicate. Due to its authenticity, these objects proffered a metaphysical doubling, a transubstantial shift of sorts, not simply a repetition of external appearance. Francis Borgia’s solution walked a fine line between an ecclesiastical reform committed to reinforcing the standing of Marian and other saintly mediation and a tradition of devotional art premised on removing human intervention from the creation equation. Recently John O’Malley, S.J. has even contended that the role of image reform in the discussion of Tridentine reform was more incidental than essential, an unexpected side effect more than a goal, in the face of the chief concern for the need to augment the status of mediation.<sup>20</sup> For St. Luke was an intercessor twice over, as an evangelist and as a painter, perhaps also one of the reasons why the story of St. Luke painting the Virgin, a subject rarely pictured before Reformation, began to appear more frequently both North and South of the Alps.<sup>21</sup> And mediation had always been achieved through simulation.<sup>22</sup> The touch of St. Luke’s paintbrush was also a substitute for the immediate contact with the divine provided by *acheiropoeita* images, objects “made without human hands,” like Veronica’s *sudarium* or King Abgar of Edessa’s *mandylion*.<sup>23</sup> In the Catholic tradition of sacred art, the cooling touch of Jesus’ hand and sweat had ceded to St. Luke’s paintbrush and oil, and finally to the anonymous mechanization of printing press and ink. This was as true for painted as printed copies, but since the emphasis fell on a notion of replication that had not existed before the printing press, the model was the printed images of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, like that of Hieronymus Wierix (fig. 4). And yet, since Pius had officially approved these copies of icons, papal infallibility demanded that their status as sacred images lay beyond dispute. Borgia’s seemingly simple request had delivered the justification for a man-made, yet direct, second “original.” The printing press ideal of cultural diffusion, from prototype to print, provided a timely reform of the venerable *acheiropoeiton* legend of image production by appropriating the latest in technological prowess to shore up centuries of Catholic pictorial tradition.

Multiples initially seemed like a great boon, an unanticipated bounty for serving the world. Since at least 1170, the only “*santo viaggio*,” or “holy voyage,” the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* regularly made was to meet and bow, the so called “*inchinata*,” to the icon of Christ from the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran during the



Fig. 4 Hieronymus Wierix, *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, before 1600, engraving, Rijksmuseum, Prentenkabinet, Amsterdam.

annual Assumption Day procession. Ostrow has demonstrated how by the time of her installation into a specially designed tabernacle in the Pauline Chapel of Santa Maria Maggiore (January 27, 1613), she had become more static, subsumed into a reliquary herself and enshrined behind a mausoleum-like wall of marble in the Basilica at the behest of Pope Paul V.<sup>24</sup> It could even be argued that this fixing of a mobile icon, an image intended to move in procession, was largely possible, because by the late sixteenth century, official copies of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* had received papal blessing. Via her many replicas, she could reach young Jesuit scholastics at the Roman novitiate, in what is believed to be one of the first copies (1569), now in the Chapel of St. Stanislas Kostka in *Sant' Andrea al Quirinale*. This version was painted by Giuseppe Valeriano, who like Sigmund Leirer (Sigismondo Laire), would gain an international reputation for his copies of the Madonna, if Alessandro Valignano's letter (1575) imploring the Jesuit Superior General Everard Meuricq to send the accomplished Valeriano to Japan, presumably to repeat what he had done in Rome for Japanese novitiates, is to be believed.<sup>25</sup> In turn, these copies led to more copies. Some of the earliest next-generation painted copies, in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, would include the "*Mater ter admirabilis*" ("*Madonna Thrice Admirable*") in Munich and a treasured gift for Queen Catherine of Portugal, wife of João III. By means of replication, the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* would become the hallmark of many



European Jesuit churches, with notable exempla preserved in the Museum of São Roque in Lisbon, the New Cathedral of Coimbra and the Pius XII Museum in Braga. For the “afterlives” of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, it is perhaps more instructive to follow David Joselit’s conceptualization of “format,” and “reformatting,” where “heterogeneous, and often provisional, structures channel contact” as patterns amassed in an enterprising concatenation of pictorial reproduction.<sup>26</sup> Visual intercessors for a mediated image restored the mobility of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* once more, and through its networked formatting, were able to actually increase her range in the expanded geography of a global platform.

Further afield, outside Europe, the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* was reformatted even more dramatically, appearing in new guises made abroad, both by local artists and Europeans stationed overseas. For example, seventeenth-century doubles of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* have appeared in the repetitive pair of flanking altarpieces in the Church of St. Stephen in the Armenian quarter of New Julfa in Isfahan, Iran, where they bookend the *Martyrdom of St. Stephen*. Sometimes every attempt was made to reproduce her identically, as in the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* first housed in the Cathedral Basilica of Salvador in Bahia, Brazil, itself created circa 1575 after a copy by João de Mayorca that was tragically lost at sea during the martyrdom of Blessed Inácio de Azevedo, S.J. Another remarkably close reproduction of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* in oil on copper, housed today in the Tokyo National Museum, has been attributed to a European artist due to stylistic analysis, either brought into the country as a gift or made in the resident Jesuit workshop led by Giovanni Niccolò, S.J. (fig. 5).<sup>27</sup> In Japan alone, another oil on copper painting of a haloed *Madonna and Child*, very likely of the *Salus Populi Romani* type (late 16th-early 17th century, Tokyo, Tokyo National Museum), survives, albeit broken into two large pieces, also likely painted by a European and kept in the Repository of Christian Objects (*Shūmon-gura*) of the Nagasaki Magistrates Office, suggesting many more copies had been brought and distributed, as do the appearance of similar *Madonna and Childs* in various Japanese *Namban* screens that depict the arrival of westerners.<sup>28</sup> An observation by the ever perceptive Luis Frois, S.J. after Bishop Pedro Martins, S.J.’s visit to the Niccolò workshop at the Arie Seminary in 1596, suggests these were the kinds of copies that likely functioned as models for yet more reproductions:

Finally, the thing which astonished them the most was to enter a long building overflowing with boys and young men who were painters, every one of them with his picture in his hand, painting various images in oil, which, when they were finished, the Father Vice-Provincial went to hand out to the Christian gentlemen and those in the Society. At the front of this building was placed an image of Our Lady after St. Luke painted by one of these students who was nineteen years old. They were at great pains to believe that such a perfect and accomplished work had been produced by a mere boy.<sup>29</sup>

Other times, a degree of artistic license seems to have been encouraged in turn-of-the-century painted copies. After all, the first copy of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* for Borgia himself resulted in an “updated version” with many of the characteristic details streamlined and Byzantine stylistic preferences elided in favor of sixteenth-century Italian naturalism.<sup>30</sup> This strain of replication was as much a product of workshops run by the Society as of the courtly circles exposed to the art brought by Jesuits. Painted counterparts from the latter category include Manohar’s version of the *Virgin Mary* from India (ca. 1590–1595, Fondation Custodia, Collection Frits



Fig. 5 Anonymous, *Madonna and Child*, late 16th century–early 17th century, oil on copper plate, Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo.

Lugt, Paris), a Gondarine artist's centering of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* in the midst of stories from the Life of Christ (ca. 1600, Addis Ababa University, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa), and a Chinese artist's "stylistic inculturation" of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* with changed features, clothing and even a topknot hairstyle for the Christ child (late 16th–early 17th century, Field Museum, Chicago). To the modern eye, these do not look so much like copies as "new adaptations" of a common iconic theme. But to the early modern mind, what counted about all the copies of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* was that after the printing press model, they were "originals" preserving and furthering canonical iconographical identity, and thus functioned as sacred art under the imprimatur of papal authority, regardless of their individual stylistic autonomy. Joselit has pointed out "our real work begins after art in the networks it formats," and this was certainly the case for the post-Tridentine peregrinations of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* long after she was conceived.<sup>31</sup>

Relational aesthetics have been characterized by Nicolas Bourriaud as "the work of every artist is a bundle of relations with the world, giving rise to other relations, and so on and so forth, *ad infinitum*."<sup>32</sup> And indeed, the afterlives of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* were as numerous as they were varied, at times combined with other popular Tridentine iconographies, as Yoshie Kojima has argued in the case of Immaculate Conception iconography in the later hanging devotional scrolls, or *okake-e*, of the *Kakure Kirishitan*, or "Hidden Christians."<sup>33</sup> Prints in particular played a vital role

as transmitters of ideas, as some painted *Ecce Homo okake-e* went so far as to imitate in reproduction the lines of a print that must have served as their model.<sup>34</sup> Akiyama has even pointed out that on Ikitsuki Island this process of copying sacred art was termed “*osentaku*,” in the sense of a ritual washing or cleansing, since the creation of a new devotional object only occurred when an older one had been “retired.” The new painting was inaugurated as “*gozen-sama*,” or “my lord,” at which time the older sacred image received the title of “*goinkyō-sama*,” or “emeritus” image.<sup>35</sup> Even *fumi-e*, bronze relief plaquettes made after Christian religious prints for apostasy testimonials, would be wrapped by *Kakure Kirishitan* in an honorific red robe, alluding to the animated “presence” of the prototype.<sup>36</sup> The ritual sense that accompanied the original was likewise transferred and preserved in its replications. Copies of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* were thus not only about reaching the rest of the world for the first time, they also encapsulated a moment when a picture’s relationship to the world was being dynamically restructured.

### Material Mediations

When St. Francis Borgia envisioned world-wide coverage for the Virgin via the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*’s various replications, he provoked a fundamental revision of pictorial value. What he could not anticipate, however, was how multiples would undercut materiality and thus the ultimate goal of a reinvigorated devotional presence of the object. By the second half of the seventeenth century, the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* would return to Europe after her circumnavigation in copies like this *aedicula*-style *Reliquary*, bejeweled with semi-precious stones, that hints at how an icon’s global reach had become magnified at the expense of the status of the object (fig. 6). In the copies of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, technologies of transmission, like the printing press model, revised older technologies of image production and the myths they generated. But cross-cultural contact also caused sacred imagery to become quite literally “out-of-touch.” In other words, co-opting a printing press model for the reformatting of classic narratives of touch-based sacred imagery ensured that by distancing divine pedigree through potentially infinite, if impersonal mechanical mediation, the door had been opened to privilege the subject of replication over the object’s intrinsic uniqueness. Overseas exploration tendered broader vistas and audiences at the cost of an original’s exceptional singularity, or as Walter Benjamin indelibly coined, a loss of “auratic presence.”<sup>37</sup> But these new horizons also offered a solution that Benjamin did not have at his disposal. Perhaps inevitably, after material presence was minimized in the translation of subject from object to object, from oil painting to paper print to wooden reliquary, this lacuna began to be filled with the arrival of new materials that arose from the discovery of raw resources via overseas trade. In the depreciated image, the distinctiveness of unknown materials had a new role to play when deemed “exotic” that pushed their presence, the matter of the image, to center stage. It was no accident that at the very moment, when traditional components were devalued through multiplicity, older object types recast in new materials began to be accepted into the corpus of western art, even celebrated by kings and popes.

These were media that made their entrance inextricably bound to the convergence of world and printmaking, such as the use of a print as a source, like the fantastic



Fig. 6 Portuguese Artist, *Reliquary with Painting of the Salus Populi Romani Madonna*, second half of 17th century, ebony, gilt bronze, colored glass and oil painting on copper, Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa/Museu de São Roque, Lisbon.

feather painting of the *Mass of St. Gregory* (1539, Musée des Jacobins d'Auch, Auch) given as a gift to Pope Paul III in gratitude for the papal bull "*Sublimus Dei*" that recognized Native Americans as rational human beings, not slaves, according to Aristotelian notions of existence. Crafted from specially cultivated feathers and pasted on a hard backing, usually wood, leather or copper, this *Mass of St. Gregory* produced a reflective surface like a portable mosaic, whose new economy of rarity, even in New Spain, augmented the devalued object. Or these were objects that shared print techniques, like a burin, but now carved into elephant bone rather than a sheet of copper, like the *Stool* now in Vienna (1554, Stift Kremsmünster Abbey). The value of the object lay in the reuse of the right foot and shoulder-blade of Suleiman the elephant, a gift from the King of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) to João III of Portugal, before finally joining the collection of the Habsburg Archduke Maximillian II. The *Salus Populi Romani Madonna Reliquary* was also crafted from the exotic, in this case the ebony of the East reformatting a Roman subject in a Lisbon collection. The image was straining under the pressure of its reproducibility, and the results were anxious, loquacious objects that went into overdrive to supply the relentless rhetoric of tangible proof. It was no longer enough to hold the bones, the material remnants, liberated from nineteen saints' bodies. They must be housed in their own micro-temple, sheltered in rare ebony,



showered with gilt bronze and gemstones, and crowned with that most delicate of paintings, the copper picture, itself entrusted with one of the most valued images. The strategy of using valuable materials to reify the devotional object's worth, familiar from the medieval period, was fortified with the new resources of the early modern world to bolster the diminished presence of the increasingly distant reverberations of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna*.

By placing replication at center stage, in the end the printing press model of production offered a more robust role for material mediation. In the move to reassert human presence in production, and by implication the neuralgic history of touch in devotional art, material testimonies to worldly experience became the new "truth" standard. The presence of the object was affirmed through reference to experience in the world, the *souvenir* usurping the place of *memoria*. The claim was no longer that the artist had personally copied the verisimilitude of the original in Rome to the best of his ability. Nor was the impact of the printing press the one cultivated by Protestant reform that directed its audience to reproducible content irrespective of formal distinction. The worldwide theater of Catholic reform allowed it to go one step further, so its printing press effect would result in the underscoring of a global community of images attained through a geographic exploration built into the object itself. The emerging Catholic Reformation artist would assert that he put himself in the lineage of a sacred object by virtue of his reinterpretation of a canonical subject through the literal materials of an expanded world. As copies of copies began to proliferate, the subject threatened to overwhelm the object. It was global exploration into new raw resources that allowed sacred art to mount a rearguard defense premised on the adamant, physical reforming of the presence of the object — its "thinghood" — through the incessant advocacy of its materials. Before photography (Benjamin), before the internet (Joselit), technologies of transmission like the paper revolution of the printing press manually reformatted the machinery of devotional art from reliquary "*translatio*," or "carrying across," of a civic space to a re-materialized translation for, and from, the newly global arena.

## In Conclusion

It was the tools of technology that held the power to lift the weight of centuries-old tradition. When Pope Pius V was confronted with challenges on two fronts — (1) the status of miraculous imagery and (2) the mandate to convert the world — Francis Borgia's relatively minor request must have seemed like a blessing in disguise. By allowing Borgia to have the icon of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* copied, Pius could address both concerns with a single action. Pictorial exceptionalism, the revival of the intrinsic value of the object, could be addressed via its materials. What he could not predict were the negative aspects of mechanical reproduction, the undermining of objecthood when reform demanded reformatting, that would engender the very real forfeiture of auratic presence when the Renaissance print engaged the world for the first time. The travels of the *Salus Populi Romani Madonna* reveal just how that depreciation began. With replication, the reform of materiality of the object increasingly came under threat until content would ultimately subsume form. The subject matter, the meaning of an object, would become more important than its physical qualities until new materials could effectively launch a counter-claim for

attention, a rebuttal to the loss of value. The printing press model was a catalyst for world change, but also a dangerous tool. It fostered initial gains only to create the conditions where the mechanization of touch in the image-making process cost the hermeneutic status of the sacred object. The Old World needed the New. Without the theater of the world, without its resources, devotional art would have suffered a severe blow. In a narrative sequence that spanned the impact of machinery on the sacred image to the reform of mediation that ultimately resulted in an augmented role for materiality, Pius may never have guessed where his savvy strategic decision would end. But this does not diminish his prescient conviction that it was in the global dimensions of Catholic reform, the “catholic” in Catholicism, where the best chances lay for a resuscitation of sacred art.

## Notes

1 Pappus of Alexandria, *Synagoge*, book 8, Ivor Thomas (trans. and ed.), *Greek Mathematical Works*, Cambridge (MA), 1941, vol. 2, p. 35.

2 Joannes Bollandus, S.J. et al., *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu, a Provincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata*, Antwerp, 1640, p. 571; Ralph Dekoninck, “La Passion des images: La traversée des images jésuites entre Ancien et Nouveau Monde,” *De zeventiende eeuw*, 21, 2005, pp. 54–56; Mia M. Mochizuki, “The Diaspora of a Jesuit Press: Mimetic Imitation on the World Stage,” Feike Dietz et al. (eds.), *Illustrated Religious Texts in the North of Europe, 1500–1800*, Farnham, 2014, pp. 130–132.

3 F.M. Keener (ed.), *Virgil's Aeneid Translated by John Dryden (1631–1700)*, Oxford, 1997, book 6, lines 120–125, p. 152.

4 Maximilian von Habsburg, *Catholic and Protestant Translations of the Imitatio Christi, 1425–1650*, Aldershot, 2011, pp. 180–89, 194–198.

5 Mochizuki, *op. cit.* (note 2).

6 William J. Farge, S.J., *The Japanese Translations of the Jesuit Mission Press, 1590–1614*, Lewiston (ME), 2002, p. 4; Mochizuki, *op. cit.* (note 2), p. 120; Diego Pacheco [Ryōgo Yūki], S.J., “Diogo de Mesquita, S.J. and the Jesuit Mission Press,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, 26, 1971, p. 443.

7 Johannes Laures, S.J., *Kirishitan Bunko: A Manual of Books and Documents on the Early Christian Mission in Japan*, Tokyo, 1957, pp. 82, 95, 98, 101.

8 Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, Edmund Jephcott (trans.), Chicago, 1994, pp. 68–72; Gerhard Wolf, *Salus Populi Romani: Die Geschichte römischer Kultbilder im Mittelalter*, Weinheim, 1990, pp. 24–28.

9 “Tuvo grandísimo deseo y devoción de tener un verdadero y perfecto retrato de la imagen de la Madre de Dios, que el evangelista San Lucas pintó de su mano y está en Santa María la Mayor de Roma. Y aunque para salir con ello se le ofrecieron muchas y graves dificultades (por el recato y reverencia con que se guarda aquella santa imagen), todas las venció la devoción y perseverancia del padre Francisco. El cual hubo la imagen como la deseaba, y la puso en su capilla y después hizo sacar otros retratos de ella y los comunicó a muchos príncipes y señores y casas de la Compañía, para que con esta preciosa joya creciese y se dilatase más el amor y reverencia de los fieles para con la Santísima Virgen y purísima Madre.” Pedro de Ribadeneyra, S.J., *Vida del Padre Francisco de Borja*, Madrid, 1594, pp. 826–827. “*Diurorum cultum ut excitaret, augetetque, (contra atque haeretici solent, qui in Sanctorum imagines, ut olim Iconomachi, graffantur) Romae Franciscus in aes graphice incisas, et affabre sculptas*

*imagines, in omnes Provincias misit. Quin et archetypa donavit Sociis, atque distribuit.*" Pedro de Ribadeneyra, S.J., *Vita Francisci Borgiae*, Antwerp, 1598, pp. 238–239. Pasquale M. d'Elia, S.J., "La prima diffusione nel mondo dell'immagine di Maria 'Salus Populi Romani,'" *Fede e Arte* 2, 1954, pp. 307, 311, n. 63; Kirstin Noreen, "The Icon of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome: An Image and Its Afterlife," *Renaissance Studies*, 19, 2005, p. 662.

10 Yoriko Kobayashi-Sato and Mia M. Mochizuki, "Perspective and its Discontents or St. Lucy's Eyes," Dana Leibsohn and Jeanette Favrot Peterson (eds.), *Seeing across Cultures in the Early Modern Period*, Farnham, 2012, pp. 21–48; Mia M. Mochizuki, "The Luso-Baroque Republic of Things and the Contingency of Contact," *Ellipsis: Journal of the American Portuguese Studies Association*, Vincent Barletta (ed.), *The Lusophone Baroque* [Special Issue], 12, 2014, pp. 143–171; Mia M. Mochizuki, "Seductress of Site: The Nagasaki Madonna of the Snow," Anton W.A. Boschloo et al. (eds.), *Aemulatio. Imitation, Emulation and Invention in Netherlandish Art 1500 to 1800: Essays in Honor of Eric Jan Sluiter*, Zwolle, 2011, pp. 76–88.

11 D'Elia, *op. cit.* (note 9); Noreen, *op. cit.* (note 9), pp. 660–672, Steven F. Ostrow, *Art and Spirituality in Counter-Reformation Rome: The Sistine and Pauline Chapels in S. Maria Maggiore*, Cambridge (UK), 1996, pp. 167–174; Midori Wakakuwa, *Seibo-zō no tōrai* [The Arrival of Madonna Imagery (in Japan)], Tokyo, 2008, pp. 96–104; Wolf, *op. cit.* (note 8).

12 Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print*, New Haven, 2004, pp. 22–27, 113.

13 For the importance of authority in the West, cf. Gerhard Wolf, "From Mandylion to Veronica: Picturing the 'Disembodied' Face and Disseminating the True Image of Christ in the Latin West," Herbert L. Kessler and Gerard Wolf (eds.), *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation*, Florence, 1998, pp. 155–179.

14 "[...] *tamen et aliae Virginis Icones, licet aliena manu factae fuissent, Lucae nomine commendari potuerunt: quoniam cum primae inter vetustissimas ad Lucae archetypum essent expressae, non immerito, quocunque demum pervenerint, nomen gratiosus a primo auctore illo Luca retinuisse videantur*," Petrus Canisius, *Commentariorum de verbi Dei*, Ingolstadt, 1573, book 5, chap. 12, p. 761; Petrus Canisius, *De Maria Virgine incomparabili, et dei genitrice sacrosancta*, Ingolstadt, 1577, p. 697. Walter Melion, "'Quae lecta Canisius offert et spectata Diu': The Pictorial Images in Petrus Canisius' *De Maria Virgine* of 1577/1583," Walter S. Melion and Lee Palmer Wandel (eds.), *Early Modern Eyes, Intersections*, 13, 2009, pp. 262–265; Noreen, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 666.

15 "Un gran pintor de Roma," "un excelente artífice Romano," Dionisio Vázquez, S.J., "Vida del p. Francisco de Borja," unpublished MS, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome, vitae 80, ff. 280r–281r. "Un famoso pincel, valentia de la Italia y alma de la pintura," Juan Álvaro Cardinal Cienfuegos Villazón, S.J., *La heroyca vida, virtudes, y milagros del grande S. Francisco de Borja*, Madrid, 1717, book 5, chap. 9, sec. 2, pp. 379–380; D'Elia, *op. cit.* (note 9), pp. 306–307, 311, n. 52–54, 61, 68.

16 Akira Akiyama, "The 'Afterlife' of Sacred Christian Images in Japan," Shigetoshi Osano (ed.), *Annual Report of the Center for Evolving Humanities: Study of Cultural Exchange*, Tokyo, 2007, p. 137; Noreen, *op. cit.* (note 9), pp. 665–666.

17 Juan de Borja y Enríquez duque de Gandia, *Sanctus Franciscus Borgia, quartus Gandiae dux et Societatis Jesu praepositus generalis tertius* (*Monumenta Borgia*), Cecilio Gómez Rodeles, S.J. (ed.), Madrid, 1911, vol. 5, pp. 112–113, n. 68. D'Elia, *op. cit.* (note 9), pp. 303, 306, 310, n. 16.

18 D'Elia, *op. cit.* (note 9), pp. 307, 311, n. 68.

19 Ostrow, *op. cit.* (note 11), p. 120, fig. 100. Cf. Wolf's discussion of how rituals of movement and enframement contribute to the miraculous function of objects and Gaskell's

study of the photography of miracle-workers as reproductions of the miraculous. Ivan Gaskell, "In Search of Miraculous Images in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction, and Beyond," Akira Akiyama and Kana Tomizawa (eds.), *Miraculous Images in Christian and Buddhist Culture*, Tokyo, 2010, pp. 60–75; Gerhard Wolf, "Miraculous Images between Art and Devotion in Medieval and Early Modern Europe," Akira Akiyama and Kana Tomizawa (eds.), *Miraculous Images in Christian and Buddhist Culture*, Tokyo, 2010, pp. 99–115.

20 John W. O'Malley, S.J., "Trent, Sacred Images, and Catholics' Sense of the Sensuous," Marcia B. Hall and Tracy E. Cooper (eds.), *The Sensuous in the Counter-Reformation Church*, New York, 2013, pp. 28–48.

21 Hans Belting, *Das echte Bild: Bildfragen als Glaubensfragen*, Munich, 2005, pp. 209–213; Belting, *op. cit.* (note 8), pp. 47–57; Émile Mâle, *L'art religieux après le Concile de Trent*, Paris, 1951, pp. 28–48, 96–103.

22 Gerhard Wolf, "Divine Bodies, Sacred Images and Holy Sites: Contact Zones between the Living and the Dead, and between Heaven and Earth in Christian Cultures," Shigetoshi Osano (ed.), *Annual Report of the Center for Evolving Humanities: Study of Cultural Exchange*, Tokyo, 2007, pp. 86–88.

23 Cf. Michele Bacci, *The Many Faces of Christ: Portraying the Holy in the East and West, 300–1300*, London, 2014, pp. 30–47; Belting, *op. cit.* (note 21), pp. 45–85; Belting, *op. cit.* (note 8), pp. 208–224; Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art*, Chicago, 1993, pp. 80–126.

24 Ostrow, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp. 118–125, 148–150.

25 Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "Creating a Global Artistic Language in Late Renaissance Rome: Artists in the Service of the Overseas Missions, 1542–1621," Pamela M. Jones and Thomas Worcester, S.J. (eds.), *From Rome to Eternity: Catholicism and the Arts in Italy, ca. 1550–1650*, Leiden, 2002, p. 231.

26 David Joselit, *After Art*, Princeton, 2013, pp. 52–55, 66, 84, 90–94.

27 Tokyo National Museum (ed.), *Illustrated Catalogue of Tokyo National Museum: Kirishitan Objects. Christian Relics in Japan 16th–19th Century*, Tokyo, 2001, inv. no. 38, pp. 162, 235, pl. 34. Cf. Nobuyuki Kamba, "Techniques and Materials Used in Kirishitan Paintings," *Proceedings of the Tokyo National Museum*, 42, 2006, pp. 5–122; Yoshie Kojima, "Reproduction of the Image of Madonna *Salus Populi Romani* in Japan," Shigetoshi Osano with special collaboration of Milosz Wozny (ed.), *Between East and West: Reproduction in Art. Proceedings of the 2013 CIHA Colloquium in Naruto, Japan, 15th–18th January 2013*, Cracow, 2014, pp. 374–378; Tei Nishimura, *Nihon shoki yōga no kenkyū* [Early Western-style Painting in Japan], Kyoto, 1946, pp. 19–21; Wakakuwa, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp. 133–134.

28 Akiyama has suggested the damaged states of both *Salus Populi Romani* copper paintings in the Tokyo National Museum may have been due to their use as "fumi-e," since both came from the collection of the Nagasaki Magistrates Office. Tokyo National Museum (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 27), inv. no. 37, pp. 162, 235, pl. 34. Akiyama, *op. cit.* (note 16), pp. 136–138.

29 *Provincia Iaponiae et Viceprovincia Sinensis* (Jap. Sin.), Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Rome, 46, fol. 283b; Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit missions in Asia and Latin America, 1542–1773*, Toronto, 1999, pp. 69–70.

30 D'Elia, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 306.

31 Joselit, *op. cit.* (note 26), p. 96.

32 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, Simon Pleasance (trans.), Dijon, 2002, p. 22.



33 Akiyama, *op. cit.* (note 16), pp. 139–140; Kojima, *op. cit.* (note 27), pp. 378–383; Tadashi Nakajyo and Kenichi Tanigawa, *Kakure Kirishitan no seiga* [*Sacred Paintings of the Hidden Christians*], Tokyo, 1999.

34 Akiyama, *op. cit.* (note 16), pp. 139–140; Kojima, *op. cit.* (note 27), pp. 379–381; Nakajyo and Tanigawa, *op. cit.* (note 33), pp. 82–85.

35 Akiyama, *op. cit.* (note 16), p. 139.

36 Akiyama, *op. cit.* (note 16), pp. 134–140; Nakajyo and Tanigawa, *op. cit.* (note 33), pp. 105–106.

37 Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Hannah Arendt (ed.), *Illuminations*, New York, 1968, pp. 217–251.

### Photo Credits and Sources

Fig. 1 (KU Leuven, Faculty of Theology and Religious Sciences, Maurits Sabbe Library), fig. 2 (photo: Alinari/Art Resource, New York), fig. 3 (photo: Mauro Brunello), fig. 4 (Rijksmuseum, Prentenkabinet, Amsterdam), fig. 5 (photo: Yoshiro Hashimoto, 9 December 2009), fig. 6 (photo: Julio Marques).